

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY ROME

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY LISBON

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 237189

E.O. 11652:XGDS-1

TAGS: CASC, PDIP, PFOR, AO, IT, US

SUBJECT: W/W: MARION D. MILLER

1. THE DEPT HAS JUST BEEN INFORMED THAT A 60 YEAR OLD AMERICAN MISSIONARY IN ANGOLA, MARION D. MILLER, WAS ARRESTED AUGUST 16 BY ANGOLAN AUTHORITIES AND CHARGED WITH BEING A MERCENARY OR CIA AGENT. MILLER IS PRESENTLY DETAINED IN ANNEX NO. 2, CASA DE RECLUSAO, LUANDA, ANGOLA. HE WAS ABLE TO SEND A LETTER TO HIS WIFE IN THE U.S. AND IN IT HE DID NOT INDICATE HE WAS BEING MISTREATED.

2. MILLER HAS ONLY BEEN IN ANGOLA ONE YEAR. HE IS ASSOCIATED WITH A SMALL, NON-DENOMINATIONAL CHURCH IN HOUSTON, TEXAS. WE HAVE VERIFIED WITH THE APPROPRIATE OFFICES THAT MR. MILLER HAS ABSOLUTELY NO RELATIONSHIP WITH ANY USG AGENCY, THOUGH HE DID SERVE IN THE MILITARY IN THE 1940'S AND WAS IN THE CIVIL SERVICE UNTIL HIS RETIREMENT SOME YEARS AGO.

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3. HIS FAMILY AND CHURCH ARE PURSUING SEVERAL COURSES OF ACTION TO OBTAIN HIS RELEASE, INCLUDING DIRECT COMMUNICATION, REQUESTS THROUGH THE AMERICAN RED CROSS AND THE ICRC AS WELL AS APPEALS FROM OTHER RELIGIOUS FIGURES AND BODIES WITH INFLUENCE IN ANGOLA. THEY HAVE ASKED THE USG

TO ASSIST IN ANY WAY WE CAN AND HAVE CONTACTED SENATOR BENTSEN.

4. WE DESIRE TO USE THE GOOD OFFICES OF THE GOI TO PROVIDE WHATEVER CONSULAR ASSISTANCE CAN BE OFFERED TO MR. MILLER. PLEASE APPROACH THE ITALIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY AT THE APPROPRIATE LEVEL AND MAKE THE FOLLOWING REQUESTS. SPECIFICALLY, WE WOULD LIKE AMBASSADOR VECCHI TO INFORM THE ANGOLAN AUTHORITIES THAT THE USG HAS LOOKED INTO MR. MILLER'S BACKGROUND AND IS CONVINCED HE IS A MISSIONARY, NOT A MERCENARY; TO ASSURE THE ANGOLANS THAT MR. MILLER IS A RETIRED US CIVIL SERVANT WITH NO OTHER CONNECTION WITH THE USG; TO ASK TO BE ALLOWED TO VISIT MR. MILLER; AND, TO ASK THE ANGOLANS TO RELEASE MR. MILLER AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

4. WE WOULD ALSO LIKE TO LEARN AMBASSADOR VECCHI'S OPINION AS TO WHETHER LEGAL ACTION WITHIN THE ANGOLAN JUDICIAL SYSTEM MIGHT ASSIST IN HIS RELEASE. YOU SHOULD INFORM THE GOI THAT MILLER'S CHURCH AND FAMILY HAVE INDICATED A WILLINGNESS TO PAY THE LEGAL EXPENSES OF RETAINING A LAWYER. IT WOULD BE VERY HELPFUL IF AMBASSADOR VECCHI COULD PROVIDE US WITH THE NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF PREFERABLY ENGLISH SPEAKING LAWYERS WHO COULD REPRESENT MR. MILLER, IF NEEDED. WE WOULD ADVISE THE FAMILY TO GET IN TOUCH WITH THE LAWYER DIRECTLY.

5. YOU SHOULD INFORM THE GOI THAT WE ARE VERY APPRECIATIVE OF THE EFFORTS OF THEIR AMBASSADOR IN LUANDA IN ARRANGING THE RETURN OF GEARHART'S REMAINS AND WE WILL BE THANKFUL FOR ANY ASSISTANCE THEY CAN PROVIDE IN THIS CASE. KISSINGER

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